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CIA mole probe on ex-counterspy

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WASHINGTON — James J. Angleton, former counterintelligence chief of the Central Intelligence Agency, is the target of a new CIA investigation into Soviet penetration of the agency.

Cleveland Cram, a former CIA station chief and a rival of Angleton, has been hired to investigate Angleton's role in the Kim Philby case, according to agency and congressional sources. Harold "Kim" Philby is the flamboyant British intelligence official who fled in 1963 to Russia, where it was revealed he had been a high-level KGB officer for many years.

Cram has just completed an investigation of whether a mole — a secret double agent — had penetrated the CIA. His report, sent last week to CIA Director Stansfield Turner, blamed three former CIA directors and Angleton for allowing the penetration, the Sunday News Journal reported on March 24.

Cram, former CIA station chief in Ottawa, put the blame on directors Richard M. Helms, George Bush and William E. Colby, along with Angleton.

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and CIA sources confirmed yesterday that Cram was assigned to investigate the Philby case because of a growing belief that Angleton may have been "less than successful" — as one source put it — in protecting the CIA from penetration by enemy agents.

Critics of the probe and friends of Angleton have suggested that Angleton may be an easy target. They say that he was picked as the scapegoat in the mole probe because the three former CIA directors cited in the Cram report "are too hot to take on."

The report was more critical of Helms than Angleton, but Cram's new \$180.50-a-day consulting assignment is aimed only at Angleton.

"There seems to be a feeling over there [at the CIA] that Angleton is the easier target," said a Senate Intelligence Committee staff member. "Dick Helms has nine lives around here. He gets away with perjury, assassinations and now he seems to be skating on the mole thing. We will not let it go. The mole business will be big around here next year, very big."

According to CIA sources, Cram will look into why Angleton never was able to discover Philby's true role even though Angleton and Philby were so close they lunched together along the Potomac during the British officer's stays in Washington. They had met during World War II in London.

Cram has been given access to the notes of William Harvey, now dead, once the CIA chief of "Staff D," clandestine services, CIA sources said. Harvey is described as the first intelligence official to suspect Philby was a KGB mole in British intelligence.

These sources say that CIA Director Turner's counterintelligence aide, Robert D. "Rusty" Williams, obtained copies of Harvey notes that are supposed to show that Angleton rejected attempts to investigate Philby.

It was not until 1963 that Angleton learned through a defector that Philby was in fact a Soviet agent — too late to prevent Philby from going "home" to Moscow.

"We want to know why the hell the leading CI [counterintelligence] man in the business couldn't finger Philby," said one CIA Office of Security official who has been pushing the Cram probes.

Victor Marchetti, a former top CIA official, and now a critic of the agency, said that if Angleton was a mole, it was unwitting. "He was a mole only because he was so damn predictable. The Sovs could predict everything he was going to do."

Marchetti says that if anyone is responsible for the agency being penetrated he believes it to be Richard Helms. "Helms has enough on everyone on that intel-

available for a long time that required someone who had been around long enough to know the cast of characters."

The original Cram investigation was touched off by the publication a year ago of "Legerd: The Secret Life of Lee Harvey Oswald." The book, featuring Angleton as a source, said that Yuri I. Nosenko, a 1964 defector, may well have been a double KGB agent. Nosenko became one of more than half a dozen defector cases that the Office of Security had Cram review.

Angleton, reached yesterday at the Army-Navy Club in Washington, said about the newest Cram probe, "I have said all I am going to say on this matter: The Philby question is one I will not discuss. As to me, or my staff being negligent, it is all a bunch of stuff, nonsense."

The 62-year-old former counterintelligence chief already has testified in closed session before the intelligence committee staff about the mole question.

Neither Cram nor Helms returned a reporter's phone calls for comment.

CIA spokesman Dale Peterson said the agency could not comment on the probes but said the committee would have nothing to say for the "foreseeable future."